

Regional Haze Rule

Basics of the Rule

The rule requires the states, in coordination with the EPA, the NPS, the USFWS, the USFS, and other interested parties, to develop and implement air quality protection plans to reduce the pollution that causes visibility impairment. The goal of the regional haze rule is to return parks and wilderness areas (mandatory Class I areas) to natural visibility conditions by 2064.

Basic Requirements

Under the 1999 regional haze rule, states are required to set periodic goals for improving visibility in the 156 parks and wilderness areas. As states work to reach these goals, they must develop regional haze implementation plans that contain enforceable measures and strategies for reducing visibility-impairing pollution. The two main control requirement areas are:

Best Available Retrofit Technology:

- **BART Eligibility:** Applies to facilities in 26 source categories (including power plants) built between 1962 and 1977 that have the potential to emit more than 250 tons a year of visibility-impairing pollution.
- **Subject to BART:** Determine the sources impact on Class I areas based on modeling. If over a certain threshold, they are subject to BART and a BART analysis must be completed
- **BART Analysis:** Factors to consider: the cost of the controls; the impact of controls on energy usage or any non-air quality environmental impacts; the remaining useful life of the equipment to be controlled; any existing pollution controls already in place; and visibility improvement that would result from controlling the emissions.
- **BART Determination:** Determine what constitutes BART control measures and make them enforceable as part of the SIP. Control measures must be implemented within five years of the date of SIP approval.

Reasonable Progress and Long-Term Strategy Requirements:

States must set a reasonable progress goal (not enforceable) to meet the goal of natural visibility. States have to consider other sources of emissions, such as non-BART stationary sources, mobile sources, etc. to achieve goal. States assess what control measures are reasonable based on four factors: costs of compliance; the time necessary for compliance, the energy and non-air quality environmental impacts, and the remaining useful life of sources. Other control measures must be made enforceable as part of the long-term strategy.

Other requirements include: FLM consultation, consultation with other states, setting a uniform rate of progress, smoke management and visibility, and a five-year review in the form of a SIP revision.

EPA Regional Haze website: <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/visibility/program.html>